

DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY (v.3)

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HANFORD ADVISORY BOARD

RIVER AND PLATEAU COMMITTEE

April 10, 2001

Richland, WA

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This is only a summary of issues and actions in this meeting. It may not represent the fullness of ideas discussed or opinions given, and should not be used as a substitute for actual public involvement or public comment on any particular topic unless specifically identified as such.

Committee restructuring

Penny Mabie, EnviroIssues, opened the meeting with introductions and a brief summary of the committee restructuring principles adopted at the previous Board meeting. The committee then nominated candidates for the position of chair. After an attempt at consensus, the committee decided to vote. Eligibility to vote was determined from the list of names on the most recent published committee list in the packet, with an exception for those who had signed up for committees at the previous Board meeting. One member had not followed either of these guidelines, but the committee determined he could vote if he definitely chose this committee as one of his two primary committees.

The committee briefly discussed selecting two vice-chairs to share the workload, but agreed to only one vice-chair position after members pointed out the difficulty of sharing positions and that the increased importance of issue managers would decrease the chair and vice-chair workload. The committee elected Pam Brown, City of Richland, as chair and Susan Leckband, Non-Union, Non-Management Employees, as vice-chair.

The committee discussed renaming itself. Issues it considered were the fact that this committee is the result of two previous ones, and that the name should reflect the committee's scope but not be too long. The committee decided by consensus to call itself the River and Plateau Committee.

Work planning

Next the committee identified issues it plans to address. The committee started with the issues on which it clearly has the lead, as established in the list from the February 20, 2001 restructuring packet section titled “Issues Assignment – Issues that clearly reside in one committee (Attachment 2).” Modifications were made to this list, including eliminating redundancies, clarifying, and adding additional issues. The modified list is incorporated in the attached Work Planning Table.

The facilitation team introduced the Committee Work Planning Table, intended for the committee to use as a tool to define policy issues, issue managers, timelines, etc. It will be a living document that can be continually revised, serving to filter and prioritize issues. Taking into account the issues identified on the handout titled “Possible topics for June Hanford Advisory Board (HAB) Meeting,” the committee began work planning by starting with the list of issues residing clearly within its realm. The committee ran out of time to complete the table, so it assigned issue managers to the remaining issues. Facilitators will distribute the table to all committee members. Issue managers and committee members were asked to work on completing the table to prepare for continued work planning in May. The committee identified certain issues, such as the Waste Encapsulation and Storage Facility (WESF) as too low in priority to warrant issue manager assignment yet.

Waste Management Strategic Plan

Todd Schrader, U. S. Department of Energy – Richland (DOE-RL), presented the committee with information about DOE-RL’s Waste Management Strategic Plan. Last fall, the Waste Management Division tasked Fluor with developing a strategic plan to determine how the Waste Management Division’s activities coordinate with and support other site activities. The strategic plan was issued on February 15, 2001 and it is available on the web. The plan divides the site’s waste into five main categories: low-level, mixed-low level, contact-handled transuranic (TRU), remote-handled TRU, and liquid. Mr. Schrader reported that the centerpieces of the plan are the logic diagrams that show how all the division’s activities tie together. These diagrams are useful for showing how other activities are affected if one project (for example, the vitrification plant) slows down. Mr. Schrader believes another benefit of the strategic plan is that it details how to deal with remote-handled transuranic waste. The plan also targets when technologies are required.

Mr. Schrader listed some of the weaknesses of the strategic plan. Not all activities are funded. The logic diagrams do not all align with the Tri-Party Agreement (TPA), which DOE-RL is currently discussing with Ecology. Mr. Schrader emphasized that the biggest impact on waste management is the new budget; he warned that there could be a significant effect on out-year activities. Fluor will provide DOE-RL with a new baseline in June, at which point DOE-RL will reassess the strategic plan’s priorities and funding

realities. He added that the plan is a living document that Fluor must update every year, making it a potentially important tool for the HAB. He pointed out that this plan is independent of high-level waste like in the tank farms, and is specific to DOE-RL.

Committee Discussion

- Does the strategic plan take imported waste into account? Mr. Schrader explained that the plan does not break down into on-site or off-site waste, but it does determine whether more trenches are needed.
- Why doesn't this strategic plan use the TPA as its basis? Mr. Schrader answered that the plan generally aligns with the TPA and is mainly off with regard to the remote-handled TRU facility because the waste streams are not yet big enough. DOE-RL decided that it made better economic sense to bring the facility online later in the process, which is not in alignment with the TPA, but possibly prevents early overcapacity. Mr. Schrader acknowledged that DOE-RL must submit a change request as part of the dispute resolution on this issue.
- What are other non-TPA aligned areas? Mr. Schrader responded that DOE-RL thinks it will miss milestones M-91-05-T01, M-91-06-T01, M-91-08-T01, and possibly M-91-07. All of these have to do with TRU waste.
- The committee inquired about the status of the Hanford Rail lines. Mr. Schrader explained that DOE-RL has been funding the application of herbicide to the railroad to keep it available. DOE-RL would like to keep the railroad potentially viable because in the future it may be beneficial to ship via rail instead of truck.
- A question was asked about disposal sites. Would those be consumed if you were not accepting off-site waste? That forecast was based on on-site waste. The forecast was based on existing generators and their waste production, all on-site mixed waste.
- Does liquid sodium fall into this planning? Mr. Schrader responded that liquid sodium could possibly be used at the Fast Flux Test Facility (FFTF) or as a pH buffer in the tank farms. DOE-RL does not consider it to be waste and would prefer to reuse it. Doug Sherwood, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), added that 90% of the sodium comes from draining the FFTF. He said there are two options for the excess liquid sodium: it can either be reused in the tank farms or disposed of as low-level waste (by converting it into radioactive sodium carbonate which qualifies for low-level waste burial). Either of these uses would require a new Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) treatment facility.
- Does DOE-RL intend to have the public review and comment on this plan? Mr. Schrader responded that DOE-RL intends to present the plan in forums such as this and encourage feedback, but that there are no other public reviews planned. The committee expressed discomfort at DOE-RL "shopping for feedback at the committee level." The committee discussed organizing a presentation to update the board at the June meeting.
- Do any elements of the plan require an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)? Mr. Schrader answered that the Solid Waste EIS will impact the plan. The Solid Waste EIS record of decision (ROD) is scheduled for completion in calendar year 2002.

Regulator Perspectives

Ecology

- The committee asked how a strategic plan could be in disagreement with legal requirements. Fred Jamison, Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology), responded that Ecology has asked DOE-RL to post current TPA due dates against the strategic plan's schedule. Ecology is reviewing problems with items in the master schedule and is engaged in dispute over some of them. Ecology is interested in the project management plan with regard to retrieval, treatment, and disposal. In addition, Ecology wants a level of detail in which waste streams are tied to waste processing.
- Ecology sees a different timetable for milestone M-91. The strategic plan delays waste handling capability until it is needed, in an effort to be efficient in dealing with waste that accumulates during treatment. The milestone is for DOE-RL to analyze this now, not later, so Ecology is reviewing whether that delay is acceptable or not.
- Mr. Jamison said that in June 2000 DOE-RL submitted the Project Management Plan (PMP) for TRU and mixed TRU. Ecology disapproved that PMP and required a new plan, which DOE-RL did not produce so Ecology went into dispute. Late last fall DOE-RL started the Waste Management Strategic Plan. Ecology was involved in the process and made adjustments to the DOE-RL master schedules. However, the plan did not supply enough detail about the TRU, so Ecology required that detail as a part of the PMP.

EPA

- Doug Sherwood, EPA, commented that there are a few other inconsistencies with the TPA, mostly involving commitments not made for waste streams. These include: treating mixed low-level waste and when that can be disposed, EPA is waiting on remote-handled TRU, EPA is working with Ecology to understand the streams they're concerned with, and the Allied Technology Group is using Hanford radioactive mixed waste as part of their fuel in test burns.

Remote-Handled Transuranic (TRU) Waste from Battelle Columbus Laboratories

Mark French, DOE-RL, presented information on remote-handled transuranic waste being shipped to Hanford from Battelle Columbus Laboratories. Mr. French began by explaining the background on the issue. DOE is trying to close the Battelle Columbus site, which would involve sending 100 drums of remote-handled TRU waste to Hanford. The Environmental Assessment (EA) determined that the waste should be sent to Hanford, but when Washington State's then-governor Booth Gardner learned of this plan, he directed that the waste not be sent until the Waste Isolation Pilot Project (WIPP) opened. The Battelle Columbus lab needs to remove the waste by 2002 to support cleanup and closure of the site by 2006. Background levels onsite prevent the site's release for other uses. Currently WIPP does not have a remote-handled waste permit, so it cannot receive shipments yet. If Battelle is required to keep the waste onsite, they will have to build RCRA facilities, which involves many costs. If WIPP would be open in time, Battelle could send the waste directly there, but since that won't happen, Hanford

was identified as the best option because it fits in with the WIPP certification program and the waste volumes are not significant when compared with Hanford's waste volumes. The remote handled waste may stay at Hanford for an extended period, although ideally Hanford could just send it off to WIPP without additional characterization and packaging. The out year costs for storage and WIPP certification are not known. In addition, now there are budget cut problems both for DOE-RL and Department of Energy – Ohio (DOE-OH). There is a small amount of funding to determine what the best options are.

Committee Discussion

- Where will the waste be stored on the Hanford site? Mark French, DOE-RL, answered that it would be in the non-mixed waste burial grounds.
- The committee was concerned about the lack of a WIPP certificate in place, meaning that Hanford could accept the waste then not be able and/or not afford to get rid of it by sending it along to WIPP. The committee thought that at a minimum Hanford should receive at least the minimum cost-off-setting from Ohio.
- Since Washington State learned about this Environmental Assessment after the decision had already been made, what public procedures occurred? Mr. French responded that inter-site shipments are discussed in the programmatic, complex-wide Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).
- Is this material already packaged for shipping? Mr. French answered that Battelle Columbus is packaging it right now, in accordance with WIPP. The problem is criteria have not yet been fully defined for what WIPP will accept. The waste is fine from a shipping standpoint, but there are some unknowns.
- Are X-rays and nondestructive assays necessary? Mr. French answered that he did not know; that knowledge is not available.
- What are the WIPP standards for containers? They are 55-gallon drums that go inside a shielded container. The drums are made of carbon steel and will be buried in concrete casks.
- The committee was concerned about the containers, and whether the drum lids would corrode due to weather exposure and humidity changes in the decade that they will be sitting at Hanford. Mr. French acknowledged that these issues would have to be evaluated.

The committee decided that this issue was of concern to the whole HAB because Hanford should not be responsible for future expenses of off-site waste. The issue managers for the Waste Management Strategic Plan, Wade Riggsbee and Dan Simpson, said they would review the plan and seek additional comments, both from committee members and the agencies. The committee also discussed the possibility of revisiting consensus advice #13.

Regulator Perspectives

Ecology

- Fred Jamison, Ecology, wanted to point out two other issues. 1) The schedules in the Waste Management Strategic Plan point to a proposed plan of work; Ecology wants

to see a review and would like advice from the HAB on that. 2) Regarding waste coming to Hanford – the Environmental Assessment and Waste Management Strategic Plan both relate to this issue – the HAB should look at how these are all being examined in terms of cost and future planning.

The committee took a brief break. Upon returning there was an announcement that DOE will probably extend the comment period on the Environmental Assessment for low-level burial trenches through the end of April, and not into June.

K Basins (Hanford Spent Nuclear Fuel)

Phil Loscoe, DOE-RL, presented the committee with explanations of DOE-RL's Change Request regarding the K Basins. He distributed copies of his presentation and provided an overview of the baseline change request, DOE-RL's reaction, and the cost, schedule, and regulatory impacts. He argued that overall, the baseline change request fundamentally meets the same commitments about the number of Multi-Canister Overpacks (MCOs) delivered.

The baseline change request has two parts: 1) The MCO Throughput Initiative (MTI), which increases MCO throughput to meet Tri Party Agreement (TPA) and Defense Nuclear Facility Safety Board (DNFSB) milestones; and 2) The Alternate Fuel Transfer Strategy (AFTS), which transfers spent nuclear fuel processing from K East Basin to K West Basin. The MTI did not require DOE-RL approval as it was under the purview of the contractor, but the AFTS did require DOE-RL approval. The MTI involves processing the fuel under a different procedure, more rapid handling of intact fuel, and more staffing. The AFTS moves fuel processing to the K West Basin, a suggestion by the workers to reduce exposure and integrate safety management. The principal driver for the baseline change request is cost avoidance because K East construction was underestimated. DOE-RL thinks this baseline change will reduce worker exposure, improve worker morale, and will be feasible from a technology standpoint.

Committee discussion

- How do you account for the \$17 million overrun? Mr. Loscoe answered that the rate at which the project is running over has slowed down. The over-expenditures occurred during first few months of this fiscal year and involved a longer time than was planned, so the contractors spent a lot of money on approval to start up. Then DOE-RL required a senior supervisory watch and a mentor to baby-sit the shift, which also drove the bill up, as did the process of demobilizing the augmentation staff and subcontractors. The contractors plan to do a staffing change, the net effect of which is a skills mix change. The contractor expects to end the fiscal year within variance (\$10 million is 5%), which is acceptable as long as they are not deficient for the whole site.
- Will a third bay be required to meet the MCO throughput? Mr. Loscoe does not believe it would be necessary. He admitted that moving an MCO every 50 hours is a

rapid rate, and with such an aggressive schedule there has to be a little cushion. DOE-RL assured the committee that moving the MCO's will be done safely, but acknowledged it is pushing the edge in order to stay on the TPA schedule and avoid incurring more costs.

- According to your schedule, it looks like crews will be working through Thanksgiving and Christmas. Is this right? Mr. Loscoe responded that it would be a 24-7 operation, except for two weeks closure for maintenance. The contractor will have to hire quite a few people in the next few months to meet those curves. He acknowledged that the schedule is ambitious and assumes high efficiency.

Vadose Zone Science and Technology Roadmap Roundtable

Shelley Cimon reported on the Vadose Zone Science and Technology Roadmap Roundtable, held on April 9, 2001. The HAB had sponsored the roundtable to look at the roadmap for science and technology needs for in-situ vapor transport and monitoring of waste in the subsurface. About fifty people participated, which Ms. Cimon characterized as a good turnout. She reported that it was interesting to see what is happening nationally and how those activities overlap with the Hanford site. There were presentations from scientists, simulations and modeling, and discussion of research that people would like to see. Two groups broke out to give advice on the roadmap document, so that sites can give input about their needs. Some key topics were risk reduction, strategic needs, and how to bound uncertainty.

Committee member Wade Riggsbee had also attended the roundtable and added that he saw issues relating to funding. The roadmap suggested target funding of \$50 – 100 million carried through for the next 20 years. Mr. Riggsbee commented that this was an ambitious program – huge, compared to cleanup funding needs. He saw the interface between technology and science as an important issue, as well as the overlap between field workers and technology developers.

Gordon Rogers was at the roundtable and commented that it was very interesting from a science perspective. However, on the practical side he thinks funding and the long timeframe will be problematic. He noted that a positive aspect was assembling something with the support of many federal agencies as well as state and municipal governments, since it helps to have many customers for the product rather than just DOE.

Dirk Dunning commented that the roadmap was an excellent document and plan, but again noted that funding will likely be a problem. He said there was a good emphasis on estimating uncertainty and developing modeling. He was especially complimentary of the group's approach to problem solving.

Ms. Cimon added that there was excellent dialogue about realities on the sites, getting out of the university setting and into the real world. She noted that no one from the Hanford site had worked with the group on developing the roadmap, but now Michael

Graham, Bechtel Hanford, is on the project's executive committee. Ms. Cimon hopes for more stakeholder and public participation.

Mr. Graham spoke briefly on how he got involved in the project. He joined the project to provide a user perspective and to help it focus on shorter-term goals (ten years instead of twenty-five) since DOE needs to make decisions about clean up now. Mr. Graham echoed earlier worries about budget problems for the project. He thought the project would benefit by involving multiple agencies, especially at the roadmapping stage. He thought the budget request the project set was too high.

Doug Sherwood, EPA, added that EPA Region 10 is the lead office for research and development, and offered a few comments about getting other agencies involved. Congress is trying to end Superfund. The Department of Defense's big sites are in remediation, so the idea that they would start a new research program is not realistic, especially since their environment budget went down. Starting a new research initiative with these agencies will be difficult.

Shelley Cimon committed to keep the committee updated on this project.

EPA Five Year Review

Dennis Faulk, EPA, reported on the results of the EPA Five Year Review and the resulting Action Table. He emphasized that the biggest revelation was that there is a dire need to do work on groundwater systems. He explained that action item 100-2 was pushed out 6 months in order to spread the work out. December 2001 was listed as the deadline on too many items. He pointed out that the PW-1 work plan encompasses carbon tetrachloride and was pushed to December 2002 in order to produce an enforceable work plan. Action item 200-5 will have a due date that will hopefully be closer than December 2001 (the system is not meeting objectives set in the record of decision [ROD]). DOE wanted time to study it, so by close of business on April 11, 2001, EPA will have a date. Mr. Faulk also pointed out Action item SW-1, which requires DOE to develop an Institutional Control Plan, is due July 2001. Mr. Faulk hopes the committee will follow that item closely.

Mr. Faulk again stressed that this year's emphasis is on groundwater, although depending on the budget situation, priorities may change. He reported that the biggest lesson learned was that from a staffing level this review was very difficult because it produced so much information to review. The EPA probably also did not communicate as well as it should have with the other two agencies about the meaning of the due dates, since so many changes are coming at the 11th hour. He hopes that this action table makes that communication easier and that the agencies will be able to work with the HAB committee schedule.

Agenda development for next meeting

The committee continued its morning discussion of topics to be covered in its next meeting. The committee considered moving the burial grounds issue to another meeting, but Dennis Faulk, EPA, urged them to keep it since the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) may have been violated. The committee also added the following issues: Waste Management Strategic Plan, B-reactor, Central Plateau end states, Environmental Assessment on Burial Grounds, follow-up on work planning, and time for cross-cutting issues.

Penny Mabie, EnviroIssues, brought up meeting time and place. The facilitation team plans to propose that all meetings take place in the Richland Federal Building. There will be an Executive Issues Committee (EIC) conference call on April 17th to determine committee schedules. Susan Leckband and Gordon Rogers were identified as the committee's representatives on the EIC call.

Penny Mabie also promised to get the work planning table to all committee members in order to solicit other members to be issue managers, and to poll committee members for preferred meeting days.

Then the committee produced a list of topics to be covered in the next few meetings. For a June meeting the committee identified the following issues: stewardship, burial grounds, and the national monument. The committee calculated that it could use a half-day in June, but that it would have a better idea in May. Dennis Faulk, EPA, informed the committee that the EPA is ready to share the results of the B and C Reactors risk assessment work, carbon tetrachloride issues, and negotiations about the 100 Area milestone, on which EPA would like HAB input. Penny Mabie reminded the committee that the work planning table should be completed for each of these issues.

Before adjourning, the committee set 9:00 am, Wednesday, April 18th for the agenda setting call for the May committee meeting.

Handouts

- Hanford Advisory Board Committee Lists, Updated March 20, 2001 for River & Plateau Committee
- Central Plateau/River Corridor Committee Draft Meeting Agenda, Revised April 10, 2001
- Possible Topics for June Meeting (brainstormed at April 2001 HAB meeting), April 10, 2001
- 2001 Hanford Advisory Board – Draft Issue Managers Process/List, February 16, 2001
- Issues Assignment – Issues that clearly reside in one committee (Attachment 2), February 20, 2001
- Cross Cutting Issues Assignment (Attachment 3), February 20, 2001

- Key Decision Points for Restructuring Proposal Adopted at April 6, 2001 Board Meeting, April 6, 2001
- Committee Work Planning Table (blank), April 10, 2001
- DOE-RL's Office of Intergovernmental Public and Institutional Affairs – DOE-HQ press release and key EM pages of the Budget Highlights document, April 10, 2001
- Tri-City Herald "DOE's Hanford budget comes up short," April 10, 2001
- Mark French's presentation "Acceptance of TRU Waste from Battelle Columbus Laboratories," April 10, 2001
- Phil Loscoe's Hanford Spent Nuclear Fuel Project "Hanford Advisory Board Briefing on Baseline Change Request SNF-2001-012," April 10, 2001
- Dennis Faulk's EPA Five Year Review Action Items and Public Comment Dates, April 10, 2001

Attendees

HAB Members and Alternates

Pam Brown	Madeleine Brown	Shelley Cimon
Greg de Bruler	Dirk Dunning	Gariann Gelston
Harold Heacock	George Jansen, Jr.	Dave Johnson
Robin Klein	Susan Leckband	Jeff Luke
Debra McBaugh	Wanda Munn	Maynard Plahuta
Joe Richards	Wade Riggsbee	Fred Roeck
Gordon Rogers	Keith Smith	Dave Watrous

Others

Mark French, DOE-RL	Jane Hedges, Ecology	Nancy Myers, BHI
Phil Loscoe, DOE-RL	Fred Jamison, Ecology	Penny Mabie, EnviroIssues
Todd Schrader, DOE-RL	John Price, Ecology	Christina Richmond, EnviroIssues
Gail McClure, DOE-RL	Dennis Faulk, EPA	Ruth Siguenza, EnviroIssues
Jamie Zeisloft, DOE-RL	Doug Sherwood, EPA	Barb Wise, FH
		Les Davenport, Public
		John Stang, Tri-City Herald
		James Wilkinson, WG Consulting